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ABSTRACT

The findings of a study that examined the impact of peace studies courses at the college and university level upon students is reported. The study involved 260 undergraduate students at 3 midwestern universities. At the beginning of each course, students filled out a questionnaire; at the end of the course, students were given identical questionnaires to see how their attitudes, beliefs, and levels of activity had changed during the semester. One year later students were mailed a third identical questionnaire to see what further changes had taken place. A control group also was used so that a comparison of responses between the groups would indicate whether or not the change could be attributed to the influence of a peace studies course. Analyses of the results of the study do not support a major hypothesis of the study, that students taking a peace studies course would have significant changes in attitude in a more peaceful direction than students in a control groups. However, the study does show that as a result of taking a peace studies course, one in five students do something to promote peace. (DB)

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THE CHALLENGE OF PEACE EDUCATION: DO OUR EFFORTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

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THE CHALLENGE OF PEACE EDUCATION: DO OUR EFFORTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Recently, peace education has grown rapidly in the United States. During the nineteen eighties over 200 colleges and universities have initiated peace studies programs (Thomas & Klave, 1989). The State of Oregon mandated in 1988 peace education for all its schools. Public school districts in cities as large as Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Berkeley, California; and Hartford Connecticut have endorsed resolutions requiring peace education at all levels. Bishops letters and pastoral statements from the leaders of major religious denominations have prompted parishes and synagogues to sponsor classes, forums, workshops, and gatherings on peace themes. Historically, in the United States there have been peace education efforts for over one hundred years (Fink, 1980).

To date, there has been little research done to determine what happens as a result of peace education classes. One study states that peace studies can make a difference in value orientation, e.g. that students who take peace classes become more oriented towards compassion, away from compulsion; towards internationalism and pacifism, away from militarism and nationalism; towards egalitarianism away from authoritarianism; towards peace, and away from law and order (Eckhardt, 1984). Other studies have demonstrated cognitive changes as a result of peace education efforts (French, 1984). Typically, such studies, administered both before and after a peace education event, showed that participants exhibited new attitudes and understandings.

This paper will examine the impact of peace studies courses at the college and university level upon students. Do students change their attitudes about war and peace as a result of taking a peace studies course? Do students develop more peaceful behaviors after such a course and/or do students become more active working for peace?

METHODOLOGY

During the fall semester 1983 the author of this article first taught a course on peace education. After this experience he was interested in what effect this class might have had on students. During the summer of 1984 he again taught the course and designed a brief questionnaire to find out student reactions. That fall with input from students, a final questionnaire was developed that contained seven questions about defense and nuclear policy; one question about attitudes towards the future; a question asking respondents to rate their level of concern about thirteen different world problems (hunger, energy, the nuclear threat, etc.); a question designed to find out how the respondent obtained information about war, peace and national security; a question about the respondent's activities concerning war and peace; a question about political philosophy; five demographic variables; an open ended question about why they took the course, which also contained a place to indicate how long they have been involved in peace issues; and an open ended question about why they were or were not actively working on peace issues (see Appendix A).

The design for this study was as follows. Students filled out an initial questionnaire was distributed the first day of class and students

were expected to fill it out before instruction began. Each questionnaire was coded so that a student's progress could be tracked throughout the year and a half period covered by the design. At the end of the course, students were given identical questionnaires (without the demographic variables) to see how their attitudes, beliefs, and levels of activity had changed during the semester. One year later students were mailed a third, identical questionnaire to see what further changes might have occurred. At the same time questionnaires were distributed to a control group of similar students to determine how their responses compared to the responses of peace studies students on key variables. A comparison of the responses of the students in the control group with the responses of the students in peace studies classes would indicate whether or not the changes could be attributed to the influence of a peace studies course. Follow-up interviews were also conducted with randomly selected students to gain further insight into their levels of involvement with peace issues.

This questionnaire was designed to test whether or not students 1) had adopted attitudes, beliefs, and values that support peace; 2) had adopted a more peaceful lifestyle; and 3) had become more active working to bring peace to world (political involvement). #1 was measured by student response on a Likert scale to items concerning nuclear issues, defense priorities, and relations between the superpowers. #2 was measured by asking students if they had conducted their lives in more peaceful ways. The open ended question at the end of the questionnaire which asked students to indicate the most useful thing they had learned in this course also shed light on this dimension. #3 was measured by a direct question on

the follow-up questionnaire (given a year later) that asked whether their level of involvement had remained the same, increased, or decreased and a number of stems where students could indicate the types of activities they had pursued--"I have done nothing," etc.

In 1985 the author of this article decided to conduct this study with classes other than his own, in order to measure the responses of students new to peace issues, and to achieve a level of "scientific objectivity" by distancing himself from the subjects studied. During the spring semester 1986 the final study was initiated. Three sites were chosen--two classes in the Political Science department at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, two classes at the University of Missouri at Columbus, and two classes at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater--a four year state-run college located in a rural area. Table I below provides the name of these courses and the number of students who participated:

TABLE I

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

SPRING 1982

Campus (Course)	Sequence	Number
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater		
*(Perspectives on Nuclear War)	INTRO	44
	EXIT	33
	FOLLOW-UP	9
@(Astronomy)	INTRO	38
	EXIT	23
	FOLLOW-UP	10
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee		
*(Politics of Nuclear Weapons)	INTRO	62
	EXIT	32
	FOLLOW-UP	25
@(Problems in International Relations)	INTRO	26
	EXIT	23
	FOLLOW-UP	8
University of Missouri Columbia		
*(Introduction to Peace Studies)	INTRO	26
	EXIT	17
	FOLLOW-UP	6
@(War & Peace in American History)	INTRO	66
	EXIT	62
	FOLLOW-UP	12

* = Peace Studies Class
@ = Control Group

The peace studies classes used in this study were designated by faculty on those campuses as such. The peace studies course at the University of Missouri was the introductory course in a peace studies program on that campus. The course at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater was the only peace studies course offered on that

campus; while the peace studies course at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee was part of an inchoate peace studies program, one of six courses offered that semester endorsed by a faculty peace studies network as having a war/peace focus.

The peace class at Whitewater was an interdisciplinary, team taught class coordinated by three professors. One was from physics. (He also taught the Astronomy class used as a control.) One was from philosophy and one was from biology. This course, designed to give students better understanding of the problems raised by the development and use of nuclear weapons, consisted of a series of lectures by experts and weekly discussion groups conducted by the three professors who coordinated the course. Students taking this course could fulfill a Letters and Science requirement. Students in both the control and the peace class had similar majors, political beliefs, and levels of involvement in peace issues. The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is a rural campus with about 8000 students.

The "Politics of Nuclear Weapons" course at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee was taught by David Garnham, a nationally known expert on the topic. His goal was to immerse students in the complexity of the political issues surrounding nuclear weapons. The control group for this sample contained mostly political science majors at the upper division level, some of whom had a strong interest in peace issues. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is a large urban campus with over 25,000 students, most of whom commute.

The two courses at Missouri were taught by Robbie Liebermann, the director of peace studies on that campus. The introductory peace studies course attempted to introduce students to the various concerns addressed by peace studies as a major (which is offered on that campus), while the control group "War and Peace in American History," contained many students interested in peace issues. The University of Missouri is a large state supported university, the "flag ship" of the Missouri university system. Most undergraduates at this campus live in dormitories.

A validity test for this study was conducted by administering a questionnaire to a group of thirty ROTC students on the University of Milwaukee campus whose responses were compared to thirty peace education students who had an average of six years involvement in peace issues. Since it is assumed that peace education students (who took the course because of their concern for peace) would have different responses to the items on the questionnaire than ROTC majors (who are preparing to wage war), only those items which tested to have a statistically significant difference between these two groups would be judged to have validity--a statistical response of $p = < .05$ on a T-Test of the two groups.

For the final analysis, because of the low rate of return for the follow-up questionnaires (27% for the control and 33% for the peace studies students), all three separate populations of peace studies students and control group students were lumped into two categories and a T-Test was run to compare different responses. The open ended questions at the end of the questionnaire were analyzed with an item analysis to group similarities and provide qualitative information about student levels of involvement in

peace issues. Phone interviews were conducted with 16 students who responded to the follow-up portion of the survey (8 from the control group and 8 from the peace class sample). These structured interviews asked students what they had done for peace since taking the class and what impact the class had had upon their attitudes and beliefs.

PROBLEMS WITH METHODOLOGY

Studies that attempt to evaluate changes on students as a result of taking a single course are fraught with problems. In terms of evaluating whether or not a peace studies class stimulated students to work for peace, an ideal study would follow those students throughout their lifetimes to record actions they took that contributed towards peace. Two years ago when the author of this study was talking to a former professor at Marquette University, a young woman came up to us and said, "Aren't you Dr. DiDimizio? I took a course on nonviolence with you seven years ago. At that time the course had little meaning to me. I enjoyed it, but didn't take personally the things you said in class. Nor did I get involved in peace issues. However last year, it all became clear to me, and now I am working as hard as I can for peace!"

This story illustrates a problem with the above methodology, which tracks students through a seventeen month sequence. Students who hadn't within this time become involved with peace activities may at some time in the future become involved and the course work they took in peace studies could be a significant part of that person's developing commitment to peace. Therefore this study, by no means, exhausts the activities that may

occur as a result of taking a peace studies course. It does provide a glimpse at those activities over a seventeen month period.

This study can not claim definitively that the actions taken by students to promote peace were the results of taking a peace studies class. Comparing students in a sample of peace studies students with a control group of students indicates that what occurred in the peace studies class may be a significant variable in causing students to change their attitudes, adopt peaceful behavior, or work for peace; but detailed interviews with each of the 70 students who completed this study would have to be done in order to demonstrate that it was the class which promoted this change in behavior and not some other event in a student's life. There were neither sufficient funds nor enough time to allow the author to interview all these students by phone.

Further problems lie with keeping track of students, who, almost by definition, are transitory. They graduate and move on; they drop out; they move on or off campus; live with their parents, leave home, etc. Even in the one year period between the end of the course and the follow-up questionnaire, ten percent of the questionnaires were returned by the Post Office.

Methodological problems with this study also include getting responses for the follow-up study. When the first two questionnaires were distributed in class, the professor could require the pupils to complete them and collect all of them. The follow-up study had to be mailed. Respondents could choose to respond or not. In this study 60% of the control group and 50% of the peace studies students did not return them.

Only those students most interested in the study would take fifteen minutes to fill out the questionnaire; therefore the results of the study may be biased by the reports of those students who care most about these issues. It was impossible one year later to get responses from all the students who had taken those classes, so that this paper does not report on the activities of all the students in the classes.

Additional problems plagued this particular experiment. Many of the students in the largest peace class were from Schools of Engineering and Business and this class to meet a letters and science requirement. Their values were more pro-defense than students in their corresponding control groups, and they had a conservative political inclination (as measured by a stem asking for political orientation). Also, two of the control courses (at Milwaukee and Missouri) had a peace emphasis so that student enrolled in them had interest in peace issues and a liberal political orientation. Therefore, a comparison over time with these two groups was meaningless because they were not similar in certain key dimensions at the beginning of the study.

In spite of these problems this particular sample of peace studies courses does have some value. It represents a wide variety of undergraduate peace studies courses, one with peace studies majors (Missouri) and two with students in more traditional disciplines taking the course to meet academic requirements. The peace studies courses at Missouri and Whitewater were 100 level courses were designed for freshmen, while the course at Milwaukee was a 300 level course desgined for juniors and seniors. The courses were taught in three different styles--lectures

at Milwaukee, lectures with small discussion groups at Whitewater, and small group discussions at Missouri. This sample contains many differing approaches to peace studies and the nuclear dilemma, not only among the students taking the class but also among the faculty teaching. Such diversity allows the results of the study to not be tied into one person's teaching style or the idiosyncratic political values of one population of students.

RESULTS

The results of this study will be presented in four different categories. The first will report responses to the open-ended question about what students hoped to learn in the peace studies courses. The next three categories will analyze the effect of these courses upon students' attitudes, behavior, and activities to promote peace.

What Do Students Hope to Learn in Peace Studies Classes?

One hundred eight students in this sample took courses dealing with nuclear war. Of these 108 students, 92 answered the open-ended question on why they took these courses. An item analysis was done on these responses. A majority of their responses (72%) wanted more knowledge about the nuclear dilemma. Some of their comments are:

> "I hope to learn what can and is being done to reduce the threat of nuclear holocaust. And also learn of the complete history of the development of nuclear weapons." "A better understanding of nuclear war, the problems that face the world, and am interested in the weapons and statistics of nuclear war." "Some answers to questions I have. A better understanding of the Nuclear Arms Race. Why so many bombs are available, and why do they keep building more?" "a clearer understanding of our position in the world regarding nuclear war." "More about U.S. policy as well as that of the U.S.S.R. Exactly what

our policies are concerning nuclear weapons and the consequences of the policy we are now under as well as any alternative policies." "the positive and negative effects of nukes and how the future will be affected." "How to build the appropriate weapons to defend myself from attack!" "About the immediate dangers of nuclear war and what the solutions will be in the long run."

Nine percent wanted to know what could be done about the nuclear situation and thus were interested in specific actions they could take to reduce the nuclear threat. A sample of their comments include:

"What steps can be taken that neither side has taken to end the arms race." "What I as a person can do to help keep the world from destroying itself." "I hope to become aware of alternatives and in turn make other people aware of the seriousness of nuclear war."

Thirteen percent were a combination of these two categories. And 5% of the comments did not fall into these categories. Two of these comments are "How ridiculous this weapons race really is" and "Why this madness continues?" This item analysis indicates that only a few of the students came to the class hoping to learn something that could increase their levels of involvement in nuclear issues.

Responses to this open-ended stem from the introductory peace education class at the University of Missouri at Columbia were too diverse to categorize:

"I hope to learn more about others' views toward world peace and the future;" "More about human nature and world relations;" "Hopefully optimism;" "Learn about the root of all problems. Where they come from;" "Different ideas that people have. Ways to help end political misunderstandings and prejudices;" "Solutions to world problems, where we went wrong, what I can do;" "An overview of the 'peace situation' today;" "Being in college, students tend to isolate themselves in a world within the campus. I wanted to get out of this and find out what is really happening with the nuclear arms race and other aspects of world peace."

This broad spectrum of responses indicates the wide range interest in the budding academic discipline 'peace studies.' Twenty-five percent of the students in this class wanted to know what could be done to reduce the threat of war.

Attitudes and Beliefs

A comparison of the responses to the seven items concerning attitudes towards war and peace did not indicate significant changes. An analysis of responses to these items indicates that in three of the eight items that had statistical validity that the control group made slightly more progress towards assuming peaceful attitudes than did the peace studies students. This can be explained by many of the students in the control having a strong interest in peace (those who were taking "War and Peace" in American history and those who were taking "Problems in International Relations"). Responses to the other stems don't indicate any clear changes in attitude or belief between the control group and the peace classes during this study.

The analyses conducted for this study on student attitude changes prove inconclusive and consequently do not support a major hypothesis of this study, e.g., that students taking a peace studies class would have significant changes in attitude in a more peaceful direction than students in a control group. In the future, such studies must take care to select sample populations and control groups that have similar attitudes.

An interesting finding was the responses of students in their attitudes about the future, although this did not prove to be a discriminating variable in the validity test.

TABLE II

ATTITUDES ABOUT THE FUTURE

Average Score on Scale of 1-10 (Despair to Optimism)

	INTRO	EXIT	FOLLOW-UP
PEACE STUDIES STUDENTS:	6.829	8.025	7.079
CONTROL GROUP:	7.023	6.870	6.240

The control group started out feeling more optimistic about the future than the peace studies students. After a year and a half the outlook of the students who had taken peace studies courses improved dramatically; while the attitudes of the control group declined. In follow-up interviews it was indicated that the knowledge students had acquired during the peace classes helped allay some of their fears about the future and gave them a sense of what could be done to make the world less threatening. One student indicated that before taking the course, "Politics of Nuclear Weapons" that he was afraid a nuclear holocaust. After taking the class he had a better understanding of nuclear policy and couldn't see any country using nuclear weapons because the destruction it would bring to its own citizens would be too great.

Behavior

Fifty-nine percent of the students taking the peace classes indicated that they had tried "to conduct my life in peaceful ways." Although that particular item was not judged to be a discriminating variable in the validity test, there was a 9% increase in the number of students in the peace studies courses who checked this item during the course of this study. The control group showed a 1% increase during this same time. Therefore, it can be assumed that, as a result of the peace studies classes, 8% (about one out of twelve) of the students changed their behavior in more peaceful ways.

Most significant were the comments at the end of the questionnaire where students indicated they had changed their lifestyles in peaceful directions as the result of taking a peace studies course. Many students who felt overwhelmed by the complexity of war and peace issues showed their concern by adopting a more peaceful way of living, changing behaviors to express their desire to bring peace to the world. The type of changes that students reported include "using more peaceful means of solving problems in my own personal affairs," "I haven't punched anybody." "Taken a spiritual turn," "I am learning to find peace within myself." "I talk softer." Longer quotes that verify these changes are:

> "I have placed more emphasis on maintaining peace within myself. If I can do this it is easier for me to pass it along to family and friends, work, the world and the environment." "Besides what has already been listed, I believe the most significant effort that I've undertaken is a continual challenging of my thoughts, beliefs, and actions concerning violence in my life. Culturally imposed violence through stereotypes, the media, traditions, etc. is the root, I believe, of an unstable world." "Learned to meditate so I can become more at peace within myself, so I can become a more loving and peaceful person and have a positive effect on other people and promote peaceful attitudes among other people through example."

Actions to Promote Peace

Table III below provides a summary of student responses to a stem asking about their level of involvement with peace issues one year after they had completed the course:

MEASURES OF ACTIVITY

TABLE III

SINCE (OR PRIOR TO) TAKING THIS CLASS MY ACTIVITIES CONCERNING WAR AND PEACE CAN BEST BE CHARACTERIZED BY WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

	Time	Percentage of Respondents	
		Sample (N = 40)	Control (N = 30)
1. I Have Done Nothing	INTRO	27	27
	EXIT	9	20
	FOLLOW	12	23
2. @I Have Tried To Persuade My Friends about the War Threat	INTRO	36	22
	EXIT	46	37
	FOLLOW	46	39
3. @I Have Attended Conferences and Lectures on These Topics	INTRO	33	19
	EXIT	73	35
	FOLLOW	29	22
4. @I Have Participated in Public Demonstrations	INTRO	13	6
	EXIT	11	8
	FOLLOW	20	13
5. I Have Written Letters about the Dangers of War to my Elected Representatives	INTRO	3	6
	EXIT	9	4
	FOLLOW	11	13
6. I Have Been a Member of a Peace Organization	INTRO	2	6
	EXIT	9	4
	FOLLOW	11	13
7. I Have Practiced Non-Violent Civil Disobedience	INTRO	8	5
	EXIT	5	10
	FOLLOW	6	4

****

@ = Discriminating Variable

Table III indicates both a decrease in levels of inactivity related to war and peace issues (15% of the peace studies students vs 4% of the control group in response to item #1 above) and an increase in some activities taken by peace education students to promote peace. These activities are indicated by items 2 and 4 above. Students further characterized their activities during the follow-up interview with the following comments:

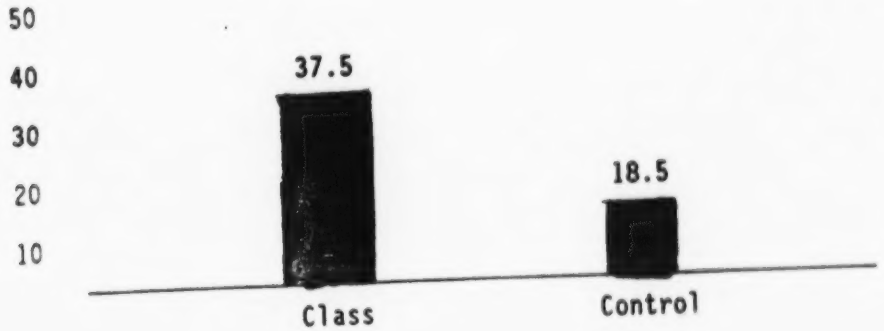
> "I am more actively involved in that I promote discussions with friends on this issue--handle it in my own sphere of associates (work) and faculty/friends. I didn't know enough to attempt a stance." "I am at the same level of involvement but not at the same level of awareness. I talk about it with other people. I try to practice it in my daily living." "Am learning to find peace within myself. Am learning more about world problems and how to promote peace to enable me to try convincing others that this is an important, urgent problem facing us now." "Talk about it to anyone who will listen. Handout information on nuclear threat. Promote a global consciousness. Maintain a greater awareness of political events. Pray a lot!" "I have become keenly interested and involved in peace education involving children and adolescents--decision making, values clarification, self esteem, and service orientation."

These types of activities are not particularly radical. Only 9% of those students joined a peace organization (who had not been in one before). The percentage of students practicing nonviolent civil disobedience actually declined. The increase in students participating in public demonstrations is the same for both groups.

Table IV below indicates the difference in levels of activity between the peace studies students and the control group as reported on a stem that specifically asked students one year after they had completed the class whether they had the same level of involvement in peace activities, or more or less involvement:

Table IV

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS BECOMING MORE ACTIVE ON PEACE ISSUES



This table indicated that 19% more students who took peace studies classes became active in peace activities than did the control group. Given the unusual nature of these samples (where the peace studies students were more conservative than students in the control group), this is an extremely significant finding. It suggests that approximately one out of every five students taking peace studies courses will become more involved in peace activities one year after completing the course. It must be remembered that at the peace studies courses at Whitewater and Milwaukee instructors had no intention to involve students in peace activities. Their intentions were to inform students of the nuclear threat, and students, out of the concern they developed for this threat, acted on their own initiative. With a different population, where students have more progressive political values and stronger pro-peace attitudes and instructors discuss what can be done about the threat of war, one would expect the percentage of students who become more active as a result of taking a peace course to be even greater.

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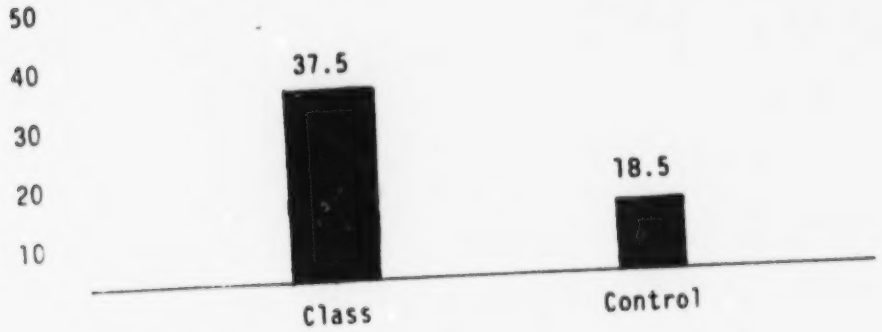

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DISCUSSION

Follow-up interviews (conducted by phone) shed some light on why students do or do not become involved in peace activities as a result of taking a peace course. These classes did have the result of stimulating student interest in war and peace issues. An older student commented that taking this class was like buying a car. Before buying a particular make of car, you don't notice that brand. After buying it you notice how many of that make there are. Another student commented that before taking this course he used to just read the comics and sports in the newspapers. Now he notices carefully all items related to defense. Previously, he was interested in these issues, but articles on these topics were flat and meaningless. After he took the peace studies class, he understood the terminology of defense debates and was more interested in war and peace issues. His overall awareness has gone up. He realizes there are many different viewpoints and sees issues from different perspectives. In this way peace studies courses empower students by demystifying complex national debates about national security.

Some students even went so far as to do their own research and write articles about war and peace topics. At the beginning of the study six percent of the students in both the peace courses and the control group subscribed to peace journals. By the time of the follow up study an additional fourteen percent of students taking peace studies courses subscribed to such journals. A year after taking the class seventy-four percent of the peace studies students were reading books on these topics while only thirty-nine percent of the control group read such books. What

they learned in class piqued their interest in these topics and helped them interpret news stories they might have otherwise ignored. Whether or not this new knowledge led them to levels of activity is another question indeed.

Some students who did become more active said that this issue is "important for the people today and for future generations." Another commented that she was "more aware of the need for immediate action." For those students who did become active their activities grew out of a concern they had for the well-being of citizens on this planet.

Intervening variables make it hard for students to become active working for peace. Respondents indicated that they hadn't become more active because of time constraints. Many students in this sample are commuter students who hold jobs. They felt that their careers and lifestyles prevented them from working for peace. Work and school fill up their lives to such a degree that they didn't have additional time to devote to peace issues. One student who had graduated commented, "Upon graduation I accepted a job which requires 50-60 hours a week of my time. I don't get much time to sleep much less promote peace movements. Time is the main factor in my inactivity."

Many students commented that they felt overwhelmed by the complexity of the debates surrounding war and peace issues. They also felt that the centers of power for making decisions in these areas are far removed from their lives, and therefore, there was little they could do. One student indicated that he thought it was important to do something but couldn't see that any actions taken in Milwaukee, Wisconsin would have an effect on

national defense policies. Students did not want to waste their time doing something that would have no result. This same student said in a follow-up interview that he would like to see the leaders change their bellicose rhetoric about nuclear weapons, and even national policies surrounding nuclear weapons but he doesn't believe that an individual can change nuclear policies. Another student thought this was an extremely important issue, but felt helpless. "This big problem seems way out of reach."

This same student says he needs direction about what to do, about how to get started working on such a huge issue. Especially at Whitewater in rural Wisconsin students felt, "My campus isn't very involved, and there aren't many activities to attend." Not knowing what to do made it hard for students to become involved in peace issues. One student at Missouri said that things he was learning in class angered and shocked him, "I couldn't sit around and do nothing about the issues." He went to the teacher outside of class and asked, "Is there anything we can do? You've given us this stuff which is now making me crazy. Let me get out of this somehow." This professor gave him the names of a couple of peace organizations on campus, and he subsequently has become president of campus nuclear freeze group, where he sets up educational programs for other students on Tuesday night. At first the class really shocked him. He said he didn't even know if he would wake up the next morning (because of the nuclear threat). He became cynical and bitter, but now feels more comfortable. He feels the class "woke him up." He no longer feels that he has to change the world immediately as he did at the beginning and understands that changes will take a long time and a lot of hard work.

Other students felt that money was an issue. Their constant struggle to raise enough funds to live on left them little time for volunteering for peace, and gave them a feeling that there was little they could contribute. One student on the Milwaukee campus tried to get involved in peace organizations but felt that "all they were asking for was money." Since he didn't have any, he felt he could make a contribution. "If you are a student and broke your options are limited."

Other students had ideological reasons for not getting involved. They thought that working for peace meant demonstrating against government policies, and they didn't think that demonstrating was effective. One student said that he didn't think that change was desirable. He didn't see anything happening because, "any change for either side is terrifying." Another student didn't think that peace was a part of human nature. "There will always be character flaws in people, thus conflict." It, therefore, made no sense to try to change something as basic as human nature.

Follow-up interviews and student comments indicate that there are many factors that influence whether or not a particular student will work for peace as a result of taking a peace class. Above and beyond the reasons provided by students for why they had or had not become active working for peace, research shows that certain personality types are more likely than others to become active on social issues (Boulding, 1974). This research, too exhaustive to detail here, indicates that things like a supportive home environment that encourages experimentation, the example of role models, and the ability to imagine alternatives--all play a role in whether or not a particular individual will take the risks necessary to try to change the

social order. This study did not delve into all these complex factors, but did find that some students were willing to do something to work for peace as a result of taking a peace education class. It must be remembered that these students live in a violent society and had to come to grips with thousands of messages they have been hearing all their lives concerning the need for a strong defense, the violent nature of the human species, the futility of trying to change things, etc. These messages work against their involvement in peace issues and had to in some way be overcome for them to take initial steps to work for peace. Often the process of overcoming such barriers takes longer than the time covered under this study. One student commented, "It takes real persistence to become involved." Consequently, it is possible that many more individuals in this sample will during the course of their lifetimes take some activities for peace than the percentages indicated here.

CONCLUSIONS

This study involving 260 undergraduate college students in the Midwestern part of the United States has just barely demonstrated the tip of the iceberg of all that is occurring because teachers and instructors are choosing to teach about war and peace in their classrooms. It does not cover the impact of graduate programs, like the peace studies program at Cornell University, which help prepare teachers, researchers, and policy makers who spend their whole lives dealing with these issues. What effect do these individuals have in terms of bringing peace to this world? Even more complicated are studies with school age children, both at the

elementary and secondary level. As school districts throughout the United States endorse resolutions requiring peace studies, evaluations should be designed to indicate how these efforts make a difference. Many teachers on their own are infusing peace and justice concepts into their regular course offerings. What lasting effect do these techniques have upon students? How do they compare to efforts to more directly teach students peace studies material through a course format? The answers to such questions will help build a sound pedagogy and rationale for why peace studies classes are important and how they should be offered. Further studies need to be done upon the many students who are now majoring in peace studies at programs across the United States. Although this sample consisted mostly of majors in other fields who took just one peace studies class, this study does point to some interesting consequences for these kinds of academic endeavors:

1. Need for Courses. This study indicated a high level of student concern about levels of violence in the world. Students came to these classes either looking for what they could do about their fears related to violence or feeling threatened. Half the student's taking these courses, when indicating why they took the course, used words like 'problems,' 'endangered,' 'threatened,' or 'dangers.' They come to peace studies classes because of their fears and concerns. They felt awakened by these classes and were glad for the opportunity to learn more about war and peace issues. In this way the university serves a legitimate role in addressing students needs to know more about these issues.

This study demonstrates how wide spread these concerns are within the United States. The respondents in this sample do not attend elite private universities. These sons and daughters of the middle and working classes in the Mid-West have not been directly influenced by some of the peace cultures that exist in places like California and Colorado. In many cases these students are the first in their families to attend college. As these students take their concerns with them into the world, the level of interest and awareness of these issues within the United States is bound to grow.

2. Knowledge of War and Peace Issues Can be Paralyzing. The issues surrounding violence in the human community are so complex that they often induce a strange type of paralysis upon students. Many students who were concerned about the threats of war and peace as a result of taking a class, felt they had to study more before they became involved. Rather than compelling them into action, these courses tend to raise their levels of awareness and increase their concern about these issues in a way that demands more knowledge. As a result, they were taking courses, attending lectures and reading to learn more about these issues before they reached a conclusion about appropriate action.

3. The Effect of the Campus Environment. Peace studies courses are not offered in a vacuum. Students who are isolated may not know where to turn with their concerns. As one student put it, "It's not like there are billboards promoting peace organizations." At Missouri an active anti-apartheid group on that campus provided an outlet for students who wanted to express their concerns about violence. Without such vehicles

individuals often feel powerless. Campus organizations with an active presence help make known various steps for bringing peace to this world. It would be assumed that on a campus with many active organizations working for peace, that more students would themselves become involved.

4. The Fears of Peace Studies Detractors Don't Seem To Be Legitimate. People who oppose courses about nuclear weapons and peace argue that it's not a legitimate academic discipline because its too advocacy oriented, hoping to get students involved in overturning defense policies; while education should be teaching theory and not activity. This study shows that the activities pursued by students who have taken an undergraduate peace studies course include activities normally expected within a democratic society. Some students write letters and work for candidates, but the vast majority talk to their friends and try to learn more about the issues. A very small number increase their involvement in peace organizations, and the study actually showed a decrease in the percentage of students practicing civil disobedience.

Taking a peace studies course is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for becoming a peace activist. It is not necessary because throughout history people have worked for peace who have never taken peace courses. Clearly, it is not a sufficient condition. Many other factors intervene that help determine whether or not a particular individual will choose to try to make the world less violent. These factors include self confidence, life style, economics, career choices, etc. This study suggests that an even more important factor than taking a course, is peer group. If a particular individual has friends who are active working for

peace, then that individual is more likely to become involved than an individual whose peers don't. The conditions that help determine whether an individual will work for peace are extremely complex. A single peace studies course may have some influence, but the majority of students studied here do not change their activities because they have taken a single course. They continue to lead their lives very much as they had before taking the class.

5. Our Efforts Do Make A Difference. This study shows that as a result of taking a peace studies course, one in five students do something to promote peace. These activities do not necessarily challenge public policy and seem to fit more within the rubric of "new age consciousness" than "radical social change." Students report a new awareness of war and peace issues. Almost 60% indicated that they had changed their lifestyles in subtle ways that involve conflict resolution, altering various aspects of their lives that are within their control. The students studied here find it difficult to know how to change public policy. But these students do talk to their friends and families about peace issues.

Peace education, like any other educational endeavor, plants a seed. The teacher often does not know what fruit this seed will bear, but the experience of this researcher is that planting these seeds begins a ripple effect, where these seeds grow and pollinate and new seeds for peace are planted. Education is an important part of trying to bring peace to the world. Randall Forsburg, the director of the nuclear freeze movement, upon seeing the tremendous support that freeze issues generated in the American public, noticed that action alone was not enough. She stated that it would

perhaps take one hundred years of education to wean the American people away from their addiction to nuclear weapons, and this struggle was essentially an educational one, where millions of people will have to talk to others, to convince them of the folly of a nuclear defense (Eckhardt, 1985). Many people who have recently turned to peace education are concerned about the perils of the arms race are, but peace education turns out to be a slow and tedious strategy to reverse the arms race. These people should realize that in a democracy, education implies voluntary change, where individuals who learn new facts, make commitments and slowly over time change both their own behavior and the behavior of the communities they inhabit. These changes help challenge the violence of the status quo and contribute towards the creation of a peaceful culture.

Notes

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